

Remarks

Acceptance/formal entry of this Amendment, which, Applicants submit, renders the application allowable, is respectfully requested. Supportive discussion follows.

Applicants note with appreciation the indication that claims 5-16, 30-32, 34-36 and 36-49 are allowable. Applicants appreciate, also, the indication that dependent claims 18-26, 28, 50-53 and 55-61 are directed to allowable subject matter and that these claims would be rendered allowable upon being re-presented in an appropriate self-contained format. Accordingly, Applicants are re-presenting dependent claims 18-23, 28, 50-53 and 55 in an appropriate independent claimed format, incorporating the subject matter of the corresponding independent claim and any intervening claim pertaining thereto.

As a point of clarification, during an initial review of the received above-date official action from the USPTO, a number of discrepancies were noted under the subheading "Disposition of Claims" in the Office Action summary sheet (PTOL-326) with regard to the listing of claims previously pending as well as the listing of claims allowed and objected to as compared with that listed under the heading "Allowable Subject Matter" on page 5 of the detailed action. Accordingly, Applicants' undersigned representative proceeded to contact the Examiner in charge of the above-identified application and on March 7, 2005, during a telephone conference with the Examiner, an understanding was reached concerning the claims which were pending, the

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listing of the allowed claims, as well as with regard to the objected claims.

The status of the claims, according to the Examiner, should have been indicated in the Official Action as follows:

Pending Claims: 5-28, 30-32, 34-36 and 40-63

Allowed Claims: As indicated in Form PTOL-326

Rejected Claims: As indicated in Form PTOL-326

Objected Claims: 18-26, 28, 50-53 and 55-61

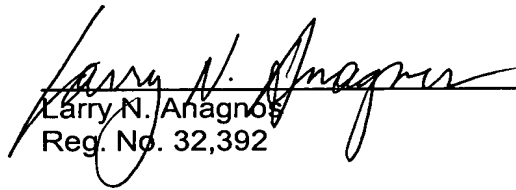
The Examiner is thanked for the clarification in this regard.

With the above made amendments, also, all of the rejected claims (in the outstanding Office Action), i.e., claims 17, 27, 40-45, 54, 62 and 63, were canceled. Therefore, the previously outstanding art rejections directed thereto, under 35 USC §103(a), were rendered moot with the canceling of these claims. It is submitted, agreeing to the canceling of the rejected claims should not be construed as an acquiescence with regard to the merits of the previously outstanding art rejections. Rather, the canceling of these claims is being effected in consideration of Applicants receiving an early formal notification of allowability. Therefore, having obviated all previously outstanding issues, in view of the amendments presented hereinabove together with these accompanying remarks, favorable action on all of the currently pending claims, i.e., claims 5-16, 18-26, 28, 30-32, 34-36, 46-53 and 55-61, and an early formal notification of allowability of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

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To the extent necessary, applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR §1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Dep. Acct. No. 01-2135 (0173.37566X00), and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP


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